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Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in Uganda

Local Financing Solutions

Final Report of 3 Regional Workshops, held from December 2014 to January 2015 in Western-, Eastern- and Northern Uganda.

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Foreword

CSOs in Uganda continue to advance the well-being of their communities and the citizenry using different development approaches and paradigms which are both local and international in context. Since 2000, CSOs in their diversity have been and continue to align their interventions with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In all the regions of Uganda there was marked improvement in the implementation of the MDGs, although there are concerns about whether the reported progress is actually reflected on the ground.

As we transition to the next development agenda, there is convergence in understanding that the degree of ownership of the proposed Sustainable Development goals (SDGs) is higher than for the MDG agenda, offering a ray of hope that the Post 2015 era could usher in an era for renewed optimism about where Uganda and the rest of the world is heading. While this is the case, there has been a continuous call for actors to ensure that Ugandans at all levels are involved in discussions regarding localization of the agenda.

Uganda National NGO Forum with the support of the United Nations Development Programme seized the opportunity of this critical moment to traverse the country East, West and North to take into account the sub national context; opportunities; challenges at every stage of developing the Post 2015 development agenda.

Our vision of localizing the SDGs in Uganda is to promote innovations such as local financing solutions and also to ensure that Ugandans understand the agenda and know their responsibilities towards attaining SDGs. It is our hope that all the citizens that were reached in the process work as ambassadors to spread the message of the SDGs widely in their work and constituents.

Lastly the idea of localizing SDGs in Uganda and a selective use of the words *---through local financing solutions....* would not have been exciting and possible without the commitment and financial support of UNDP Uganda.

Richard Ssewakiryanga

Executive Director

Uganda National NGO Forum.

Executive Summary

The workshop created a space for representatives of various stakeholder groups (government and non-governmental organizations) to discuss how to implement the Post 2015 development agenda successfully in Uganda. Participants were trained to become agents of change in the process of implementing a truly a transformative development agenda and to drive crucial discussions around policy integration and financing the new agenda using local resources.

Concrete localization measures could include translation of the SDGs into local languages and ensuring equal access to information about the Post 2015 process for everyone. Targets and indicators should be adapted to the Ugandan context for example by expressing monetary values in Uganda Shilling instead of US Dollar. Localization has to go hand in hand with participatory community planning, prioritization and decision making, as this is the foundation for long-lasting ownership. It is further instrumental for the localization process to integrate the SDGs not only into national strategies, Local Government development plans and monitoring frameworks, but also into strategic frameworks of NGOs, CSOs, traditional Development Partners as well as new ones (churches, private companies etc.).

New income sources for financing the implementation need to be generated by exploring options for increased local revenue collection and by becoming more creative in looking beyond the realm of traditional financing resources. This will bring new stakeholders on board, and by diversifying resources, make the implementation process itself more resilient to shocks. Implementing the new agenda can only be achieved through a joint effort, in which Central- and Local Governments, Civil Society Organizations, Development Partners and new partners coordinate their work and display collective leadership in driving the transformation process.

Introduction - the Post 2015 Process in Uganda

Based on the UN Secretary General's vision to make the Post 2015 process as participatory and inclusive as possible, more than 10,000 Ugandan citizens deliberated from 2012 to 2013 over the progress of the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) and what it is they want for the Post 2015 development agenda. With the presidency over the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly, Uganda does not only have the honor to preside over the inter-governmental negotiations on the new agenda, but also the opportunity to display leadership and innovation in implementation and monitoring.

The Millennium Development Goals – Lessons Learnt

As we are reaching the expiration date of the MDGs this year, the first global development agenda is coming to end. In Uganda, we have recorded significant achievements in the areas of Gender equality (MDG 3) and reduction of child mortality (MDG 4), in improving access to HIV treatment and preventing Malaria (MDG 6), in increasing access to water and sanitation (MDG 7) and poverty reduction (MDG 1). Connected to poor quality of social services, the country is still lagging behind in the areas of universal primary education (MDG 2) and maternal health with a stagnating rate of maternal mortality (MDG 5).

Over time, it has become clear that the implementation of the MDGs has affected different regions and interest groups differently and lessons have been learned over what works, what does not work and what needs to be done differently to achieve better results. Uganda's experience indicates that, although considerable progress has been made towards achieving some of the MDGs, several challenges remain for the new agenda:

- Continue unfinished business of the MDGs
- Alignment - the future global development agenda and all ODA need to be fully aligned with national development planning to increase effectiveness
- Improve quality of services - significant progress has been made in putting children in school, but drop-out rates remain high, especially for the girl child (due to the quality of education and the general lack of child protection systems)
- Vulnerable people - need to take into account the specific needs and challenges faced by vulnerable groups of the population (e.g. children, elderly, people with disabilities, etc.)
- Facilitate citizen engagement and real time monitoring of progress to increase ownership
- Curb corruption and the promote of accountability and integrity in the management of public affairs
- Create employment for all, especially the youth
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Establish and maintain mechanisms for managing conflict
- Need for a more fair and equitable global trade regime that addresses the challenges of developing countries

Localizing the SDGs in Uganda

In preparation of the Rio+20 Summit for Sustainable Development (part of the Post 2015 process), the UN in Uganda supported broad and inclusive consultations with civil society, the private sector, Members of Parliament and the Ugandan Government to capture what Ugandans want for their future. The outcomes of these dialogues did not only inform Uganda's contribution towards shaping an unprecedented global sustainable development agenda through the Rio+20 process (leading to the SDGs), but they furthermore informed the development of Uganda's long term development plan 'Vision 2040'.

After this first round of consultations, a second round was conducted in 2014, to deliberate over the *how* and the means of implementation. With content of the new agenda becoming more and more defined through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, there is an increasing interest in identifying effective, innovative and functional means of implementation for the global, regional and national context. Even though Uganda did not participate officially in the second round of consultations, the country became a localization 'self-starter'.

In addition to the global spotlight, Uganda's national positioning is particularly interesting, since the development of the second National Development Plan¹ (NDPII 2016-2021) coincides with the setting of the new agenda. Learning from the MDG process, where lack of alignment with national government planning and lack of ownership were considered major implementation obstacles, the UN and Uganda's National Planning Authority (NPA) collaborated since spring 2014 to ensure best possible integration of the SDGs into the new NDP.

Through UNDP's continuous support, Uganda is now one of the first countries worldwide to have full alignment with the new agenda, with 76% of the SDGs and all applicable targets addressed through NDPII. Moving towards implementation, it will be crucial to continue capacity building on Central- and Local Government level, to ensure the translation of the SDGs into Local Government plans and to facilitate their implementation.

The localization of the new agenda is a multi-dimensional process that requires facilitation on the local, national, continental and global level through Civil Society, governmental- as well as non-governmental actors.

Uganda's Civil Society is taking a very active role in this process, and over 70 Civil Society Organizations are currently collaborating under 'Action 2015', a coalition to raise citizen engagement in the process, to inform and to advocate for an active SDG implementation process that is embedded into Uganda's society.

¹ The Plan outlines the strategic framework for turning Uganda into a middle-income country by 2020 and it is aligned with new UN Development Assistance Framework (2016-2020).

Regional Localization Workshops



This regional workshop series leveraged the UN's expertise in policy advocacy and the intricate local civil society networks of the Uganda National NGO Forum, to engage key stakeholders in the implementation debate and to discuss possible alternatives, best practices and innovative strategies to finance the implementation of the SDGs in Uganda.

The three Workshops were held from 8-9 December 2014 in Mbarara (West), from 15-16 December 2014 in Mbale (East), and from 18-20 January 2015 in Lira (North).

The workshops engaged a total of 240 representatives from Civil Society Organizations, Local Government, religious- and traditional leaders, volunteering organizations and others.

Objective

As discussions at the UN General Assembly level focus on intergovernmental negotiations, the UN in Uganda encourages stakeholders to keep channels of debate and engagement open. More importantly, as national development planning takes shape (through NDPII and sector development plans), it is critical to engage Local Governments and the civil society sector into concrete discussions on the means of implementation. Inclusive and participatory dialogue can help to transform challenges with the implementation of the agenda by generating a greater diversity of ideas and potential solutions and by channeling expectations of stakeholders into dynamic and constructive pathways (and possible partnerships).



Advocacy: To ensure that people in Uganda are aware about the Post 2015 process and have the capacity to engage actively

Ownership: To enhance commitment of Local Governments and Civil Society to engage in the Post 2015 process and to further the implementation of the SDGs by engendering higher levels of buy-in

Policy Integration: To facilitate and stimulate the discussion with stakeholders on the alignment and integration of the Post 2015 development agenda and the SDGs within NDPII and their implementation on the local level

Financing: To discuss with local leaders ways of mainstreaming the SDGs into their budgets and plans at their respective levels and to discuss innovative solutions for financing the Post 2015 agenda

Methodology and Workshop Design

In each of the three regions, Uganda National NGO Forum utilized their broad civil society network to invite representatives of CSOs, religious institutions and traditional leaders as well as representatives of Local Government and youth-led organizations.

Each Workshop lasted 1.5 days, covering the following sessions:

	Session	Method
1	Introduction to the Post 2015 process and the Sustainable Development Goals	PPT presentation and plenary discussion
2	MDG experience: What worked well and what were the challenges you experienced with the Millennium Development Goal campaign and their implementation in Uganda?	Group work
3	Facilitating a deepened understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals	Technical input (PPT presentation and visual material) and plenary
4	Localizing the SDGs: What can we do?	Brain storming, group discussion and plenary presentation
5	Innovative financing solutions for sub national partners – approaches to modern resource mobilization and advocacy for SDG-based planning- and budgeting	Brain storming, group work, group presentation in plenary and plenary discussion



Workshop Outcomes

Session 1: Introduction to the Post 2015 Process and the Sustainable Development Goals

The first session of each workshop gave participants a comprehensive overview of the Post 2015 process in Uganda and globally. It hereby presented the outcomes of the first round of Post 2015 consultations held in Uganda in 2012 and 2013 and how they fed into the global agenda setting process. Furthermore, the presentation shed light on Uganda's unique position and role in the process with the presidency of H.E. Sam Kutesa over the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly and the development of Uganda's second National Development Plan.

In the succeeding plenary discussions, participants deliberated over the question of ownership – in particular who sets the targets and timelines, and how citizens all over the world can be engaged to hold governments accountable to implement the SDGs.

Some of the participants applauded the wide range of the SDGs, and that it would allow governments to look at poverty reduction more holistically and not just in terms of raising income.

Session 2: MDG experience - What worked well and what were the challenges you experienced with the Millennium Development Goal campaign and their implementation in Uganda?

Session two established the strong link and contingency between the MDGs and the Sustainable Development Goals through an open discussion of positive and negative experiences with the MDG process and how these lessons can be applied to ensure the successful implementation of the Post 2015 development agenda in Uganda.

General consensus was expressed over the fact that the MDGs provided a very useful framework to make development efforts more focused on urgent issues such as maternal health. But due to the lack of local ownership and the lack of a holistic approach to achieving these goals, success remains mixed. It is for example not enough to increase primary school enrollment rates alone, if the quality of the education services remains a major obstacle towards improving completion rates.

Among Local Government representatives, the issue of leadership was discussed widely, as local leaders sometimes lack the necessary skills and motivation to drive transformation processes. Too often, prioritization is made according to where most of the resources can be generated, for instance with the attendance or organization of workshops. In their experience, it is easy to get funding for workshops, which is why local leaders spend their time there.

Thirdly, workshop participants discussed insufficient transparency and accountability as a major bottleneck towards implementing the MDGs. Much room for improvement remains when it comes to value for money, and prohibiting overspending on products and services. This stands in direct relation to human resource

management in the public sector, where many of the necessary positions in the education-, health- and public service sector remain vacant.

Session 3: Facilitating a deepened understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals

During the third Session, participants were guided to examine the 17 SDGs with the 169 targets more closely. This was facilitated by a presentation introducing each Goal and clarifications about what each Goal and its targets entail. This part laid the technical foundation for Session 4, where participants were encouraged to think about possible ways of implementing the SDGs locally.

Session 4: Localizing the SDGs- What can we do?

During this session, which was dedicated to the localization of the SDGs, a reoccurring issue was coordination. It was stressed throughout all three workshops, that coordination between development partners, NGOs, CSOs, Local Governments and the Central Government needs to improve significantly to enable the successful implementation of the SDGs. This includes joint planning between different stakeholders and government bodies as well as joint resource allocation and budgeting for development priorities.

Encouraging participants to look beyond the conventional wisdom in development practice, everyone was asked to translate the term ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ into their local language and to discuss the translation if more than one speaker of the tongue were present. This exercise sparked a lively debate about what this concept actually means and how it is relevant to each participant. The translations can be found under Annex 1.

To dive deeper into the following questions, participants broke off into groups of 8-10 people. For each question, the groups brainstormed for 5-10 minutes, before they discussed their consolidated contribution for the following plenary presentations.



Question 1 - What is localization?

Localization means the adaptation of the SDGs to the local context by integrating relevant goals and targets into existing structures.

In detail, participants agreed on the following measures:

- Reflection on the meaning of the SDGs for a particular context
- Translation of the Goals into local languages is crucial to ensure equal access of people in Uganda to the content of the Post 2015 agenda
- Incorporating the SDGs into the school curriculum

- Adapting targets and indicators to the Ugandan context, e.g. expressing monetary values in Uganda Shilling instead of US Dollar
- Community based priority setting

Question 2 - What is the importance of localizing the SDGs?

Compared to the MDGs, the Post 2015 development agenda is based on broad ownership by people on all levels and ages. A critical mass therefore needs to develop the feeling of personal responsibility for ensuring successful implementation of the SDGs in Uganda.

From past experiences, we have learned that development can only progress if communities are fully involved in the process of identifying a problem and possible solutions to it. Whereas the SDGs provide the general vision, solutions need to be developed on the community level and through the people that are directly affected.



Question 3 - What can we do to localize the SDGs through our work?

It is crucial to re-focus on the community level and to incorporate locally defined needs and experiences into development planning. Important community organizations that are usually left out of conventional debates need to be better incorporated into joint localization efforts. These are for instance: churches and faith based organizations and traditional institutions.

Local Government representatives also have the opportunity to increasingly encourage and facilitate the engagement of community members in local planning and budgeting processes. Whereas mechanisms for citizen participation in Local Government planning are partially in place, equal access needs to be increased.

A valuable tool for sustainable community engagement and participation is volunteerism. Many participants remembered a time when communal work for a common cause was considered an unquestioned duty under traditional culture. Communities can explore possibilities to revive indigenous mechanisms for volunteer work and the good of the community.

The conversation needs to be extended beyond the range of government and CSOs into the realm of the private sector, cooperatives etc. This could lead into increased Corporate Social Responsibility measures that are geared towards supporting SDG implementation locally.

On a technical level, the SDGs need to be integrated not only into Local Government development plans and monitoring frameworks, but also into strategic frameworks of NGOs, CSOs, traditional Development Partners as well as new ones (churches, private companies etc.).

Question 4 - How can we define successful localization and what are possible indicators and timelines to monitor progress?

Vision

Localization is successful when a certain number of community based development projects are financed through local resources and developed, executed and monitored through the community. This requires broad based awareness for the new agenda and knowledge over the opportunities it brings for people in Uganda. Everyone can become an advocate for the SDGs and in particular Civil Society and community based organizations are informing people in Uganda about the SDGs and their implications for socio-economic development from the local to the national level. NGOs, CSOs, LGs, private companies and other stakeholders are integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into their strategic planning frameworks and sufficient resources from traditional and innovative sources are mobilized to meet the global and national targets to end poverty and for sustainable development.

Possible indicators are:

- Number of projects that are supported and financed by local resources
- Number of institutions that integrated more than 50% of the SDGs into their strategic planning framework, work plans and budgets
- Number of people who are aware of the SDGs

Session 5: Innovative financing solutions for sub national partners – approaches to modern resource mobilization and advocacy for SDG-based planning- and budgeting

Whereas Central Government transfers are by far the biggest financial resource for implementing LG development plans, they are often connected to delays and partial releases of funds. Therefore, participants argue it is crucial to tap into non-governmental resources to build resilience towards delays and incomplete transfers and to ensure full implementation of LG plans.

The discussion showed the need to explore options for increased local revenue collection. More leverage for Local Governments to collect taxes for the implementation of locally defined development priorities would increase ownership and demand for accountability, facilitating hereby an engaged citizenry.

Participants acknowledged the difficulty of generating new sources of income to implement the SDGs, but also the crucial need to become more creative and to look beyond the conventional ways. This will on the one hand bring new stakeholders on board for the localization of the Post 2015 agenda, and by diversifying resources, make the implementation process itself more resilient to shocks.

Summary and Way Forward

The workshops created the space for representatives of various stakeholder groups (government and non-governmental organizations) to exchange their views and experiences with the Millennium Development Goals, to deepen their understanding of the SDGs, and to discuss how to implement the Post 2015 development agenda successfully in Uganda. The workshop combined participatory tools with technical presentations and plenary discussions to facilitate a deepened understanding of the Post 2015 process and the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants were furthermore trained to become agents of change in the process of implementing a truly transformative development agenda and to drive crucial discussions around policy integration and financing the new agenda with innovative local solutions.

Throughout different discussions, the participants agreed that localization could be achieved if we translate the SDGs into local languages and make them widely available and accessible and if we incorporate the SDGs into school curricula. From a technical perspective, the merit of adopting targets and indicators to the Ugandan context was discussed, e.g. to express monetary values in Uganda Shilling instead of US Dollar. Lastly, localization has to go hand in hand with participatory community planning and decision making, as this is the foundation for long-lasting ownership. Important community organizations that are usually left out of conventional debates need to be better incorporated into joint localization efforts and engagement tools such as volunteerism should be given more attention.

The participants concluded that it is instrumental for the implementation process to integrate the SDGs not only into Local Government development plans and monitoring frameworks, but also into strategic frameworks of NGOs, CSOs, traditional Development Partners as well as new ones (churches, private companies etc.).

To finance local SDG implementation, it was deliberated that new income sources need to be generated beyond central government transfers as they are often connected to delays and partial releases of funds. The discussion showed the need to explore options for increased local revenue collection. More leverage for Local Governments to collect taxes for the implementation of locally defined development priorities would increase ownership and demand for accountability, facilitating hereby an engaged citizenry. Secondly, a crucial need was identified to become more creative and to look beyond traditional sources of financing development. This will bring new stakeholders on board for the localization of the Post 2015 process, and by diversifying resources, make the implementation process itself more resilient to shocks.

Finally, participants issued a call for action to all Local Governments as well as Civil Society Organizations to display leadership in driving the transformation process as set out in Vision 2040 and the SDGs. This will require a joint effort from all sides to enable the successful implementation of the SDGs.

ANNEX 1

Translation of the term ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ into local languages

S/N	Local language	Translation
1.	Lusoga	Ebighedhelelwa ebwenkhulankhulana ngha bya luberera
2.	Lunyankole – Rukiga	Ebigyendererwa by’entunguka eby’obutwiire
3.	Luganda	Empaggi namutayiika ezenkulakulana ey’anamaddala.
4.	Ateso	Ainapeta nu apak na eiya kanu apalo na epeleikinitou.
5.		Apeleinikineta numam esangete nuitopoloet awok- kwap.
6.	Lugwere	Ebigendererwa ebitulinno kukola okuleta enkulakulana eyenkalakalila
7.	Lumasaba	Bikanisiwa mu khu khulakhulana khwa lubelela(nd’alo)
8.	Lunyoro- Lutoro	Ebigendererwa ebyenkurakurana eyobuhangazi
9.	Lusamia	Ebilubiriirwa ebihulahulanya esialo siefe.
10.	Japadhola	Can madongo makelo medirek, kanyacel kod kwo maber ri ji-ji e ipiny kare.
11.	Kupsapiny	Tutuk co cetikyini sa kutas tai naratet.
12.	Lugbara - madi okollo	Otita anguezo za ni eco ba aza ko kpere ewu dru vialia vi
13.	Alur	Kungu mi dongongom ma riipinaka.
14.	Madi	Vuozo tiubale ekwi echidi wavua tana karu mba warii
15.	Acholi	Guti me dongo lobo ma mi pi naka
16.	Karamajong	Ngipitesio ngulu pedoru akitopolo akwap
17.	Lugbara	Otita angu ezozu ecopi anzi azini ba ewu drusirisi di ma eyo egapi endi ri.
18.	Lango	Pagi me dongo lobo apero.
19.	Kumam	Gaitima pi kelo dongo abedo pi kare alac.
20.	Reri	Petesi na toduroni kak laga riritawa ju ikomoyu
21.	Swahili	Malengo ya maendeleo endelevu.